

# Summary Findings of Honduras Threshold Program Endline Evaluation Report

*Independent Evaluation Written by Social Impact  
Released by the Millennium Challenge Corporation*

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## Background

In October 2014, the administration of Juan Orlando Hernández signed a collaboration agreement with Transparency International and ASJ (the local Transparency International chapter) to undertake audits of key government institutions. The agreement did not include a mechanism to fund the activities and the Millennium Challenge Corporation's Threshold Country Program stepped in to fill this financial gap.

In addition to supporting ASJ's intervention, the Threshold Country Program focused on improving procurement capacity in the Regulatory Office of Contracting and Acquisition of Honduras (ONCAE) and building the capacity of the Supreme Audit Tribunal (TSC).

In this presentation we compare ASJ's model of interventions to the performance of those by the TSC and INCAE.

# Our Results

**The average institution improved 26 percentage points across its scoring criteria.**

- The greatest change occurred in the Property Institute, where the head of the institute was highly committed to improving his agency's score.
- The only exception, SESAL, declined in public procurement and human resource management.

Table 11: Increase in ASJ scoring over time

Institution	Topic	Baseline	Interim	Endline	Percentage point change	% of action plan implemented: % (n)
PI	-	19%	69%	80%	61 pp	76% (92)
SEDUC	Procurement	27%	25%	69%	42 pp	52% (60)
	HR	24%	61%	55%	31 pp	
	Results	0%	57%	31%	31 pp	
	<b>Average</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>35 pp</b>	
SEDS	Procurement	25%	72%	67%	40 pp	72% (53)
	HR	32%	50%	60%	28 pp	
	Results	55%	78%	81%	26 pp	
	<b>Average</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31 pp</b>	
ONCAE	-	36%	60%	-	24 pp	76% (17)
ONADICI	-	26%	38%	-	12 pp	29% (45)
SESAL	Procurement	39%	37%	33%	-6 pp	56% (72)
	HR	55%	49%	35%	-20 pp	
	Results	78%	92%	81%	3 pp	
	<b>Average</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>-8 pp</b>	
Gestión tributaria (SAR)	Procurement	41%	-	-	-	40% (25)
	HR	60%	-	-	-	
	Results	51%	-	-	-	
	<b>Average</b>	<b>51%</b>	-	-	-	
INSEP	Procurement	25%	-	-	-	48% (65)
	HR	27%	-	-	-	
	Results	36%	-	-	-	
	<b>Average</b>	<b>29%</b>	-	-	-	
<b>Average</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>26 pp</b>	<b>56%</b>

Source: ASJ. "Convenio de colaboración y de buena fe para la promoción de la transparencia, combate de la corrupción y fortalecimiento de sistemas de integridad: Informe de Cierre 2015-2019." This source identified an average change of 30 pp, which we have revised to 26 pp.



## **What people say about ASJ's work:**

**“ASJ represents an innovative intervention that has combined bottom-up accountability with top-down presidential support and international (TCP) funding. The interventions appears to have had a positive impact on how procurement and human resources processes are carried out...”** - Honduras Threshold Program: Endline Evaluation Report

**“ASJ's forward-looking accountability appears to have been more effective due to a more robust repeated audit approach, more intensive follow-up, the support of the president, ASJ's prominence, and the threat of negative publicity.”** – Daniel M. Sabet

**“While the primary goal of the initiative was forward-looking accountability, ASJ did name individuals responsible for irregularities in its reports, suggesting some elements of backward-looking accountability. Reports and documentation were publicly available on the organization's website and the media reported on ASJ's findings.”** – Daniel M. Sabet

## ASJ's Work

[www.asjhonduras.com](http://www.asjhonduras.com)

Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa (ASJ) undertook social audits of key government institutions.

- Secretaria de Seguridad
- Secretaria de Educacion
- Secretaria de Salud
- Secretaria de Infraestructura y Servicios Publicos.
- The Property Institute (Instituto de la Propriedad), Oficina Normativa de Contratación y Adquisiciones del Estado (ONCAE), and ONADICI (Oficina Nacional de Desarrollo Integral de Control Interno) were added as the intervention evolved.

# ASJ'S Methodology Compared to Other Initiatives Supported by MCC Program

**TABLE 1** Design features of three Honduran audit experiences

Design feature	TSC performance audits	ASJ social audit	ONCAE procurement audits
Forward-looking accountability goal	High	High	High
Backward-looking accountability goal	None	Low	None
Means for horizontal accountability	Moderate	None	Low
Potential for vertical accountability	Low	High	None
Variables			
Robust methodology, professional staff	High	High	High
Independence	Moderate	High	Low
Public nature	Moderate	High	Low
Media attention	Low	Moderate	None
Complementary initiatives	Low	Moderate	High





## Experts' Highlights of Special Features:

- *“ASJ conducted audits of targeted institutions two or three times, producing an audit-based measure of change over time. In addition, ASJ tracked recommendation and action plan implementation, providing another indicator of auditee response.”* – Daniel M. Sabet
- *“ASJ named officials associated with detected irregularities in their reports and referred some cases to authorities, but their focus was primarily forward-looking.”* – Daniel M. Sabet
- *“ASJ's repeat evaluations and action plan tracking offer the best internally derived measures of outcomes...”* – Daniel M. Sabet
- *“ASJ represents an innovative intervention that has combined bottom-up accountability with top-down presidential support and international (TCP) funding. The interventions appear to have had a positive impact on how procurement and human resources processes are carried out...”* – TCP Honduras Draft Endline Evaluation Report



# **III. Results**



## Procurement Assessment Major Results



- The centralization and standardization of national procurements (excluding procurements for the IADB) in one procurement office.
- The development of a manual for procurements.
- The completion by 21 procurement staff of a certificate program; and 14 staff became CPCs, the most of any institution.



- Developed a procurement manual and centralized and standardized procurements.
- Incorporated a percentage-based system to evaluate bids, developed a price database for some items.
- Accredited five CPCs and developed an institutional policy for oversight and citizen participation.



- Developed a database on prices for common items.
- Improved procurement planning in decentralized units.
- Improved documentation in files.



Government leaders had promised ASJ a robust action plan to address the deficiencies identified in the report; however, INSEP personnel interviewed about both procurement and human resources findings appeared unwilling to acknowledge deficiencies and strongly contested much of the findings.

## Human Resources Assessment Major Results



- Digitized 100 percent of police files, representing a major transformation in data management that could inform rewards, promotions, and sanctions.
- Improved capacity to prevent and detect illicit police behavior, including the establishment of a vetting unit with trained polygraph specialists.



Developed a merit-based process with civil society oversight that resulted in the appointment of 16 of 18 departmental directors and 10 secretaries.



ASJ finds that SESAL continues to lack basic controls and only identifies a small number of faults worthy of sanctioning despite the size of the workforce.



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## MCC Report's Evaluation Conclusions:

- All but one of the six institutions targeted by ASJ with repeated assessments improve their scoring.
- Averaging across the three areas and across the institutions, ASJ found that the average institution improved 26 percentage points across its scoring criteria.
- ASJ found cases without evidence of investigation, without sanctions, and with inappropriate punishments.
- By the end of the Threshold Country Program (TCP), ASJ had completed 27 evaluations and 9 progress reports on improvement plans. In addition, 11 technical 39 TCP Honduras Draft Endline Evaluation Report assistance activities grew out of the reports and ASJ provided civil society oversight to 22 government processes.



## *Experts remarks and ratings of the work:*

- “The intervention appears to have had a positive impact on how procurement and human resources processes are carried out.” – TCP Honduras Draft Endline Evaluation Report
- “The intervention was perhaps most impactful in the property institute and the security secretariat where the leadership was the most supportive.” – Daniel M. Sabet
- “Where ASJ was most effective, there were also complimentary initiatives, such as with the security secretariat. Outside of the social accountability audits, ASJ played a key role on a powerful commission to purge and promote reforms in the security secretariat.” – Daniel M. Sabet
- “ASJ's reputation and access to the media helped partially address the collective action problem in social auditing.” – Daniel M. Sabet

**[Access the complete report](#)**